

COUNTRY Hungary

TOPIC 1. Reorganization of the Hungarian AVH Border Guard Battalions 25X1A
2. Border Guard Area Headquarters in Csorna and Zalaegerszeg

EVALUATION 25X1 PLACE OBTAINED 25X1A

DATE OF CONTENT 24 May 1950 to 24 June 1951

DATE OBTAINED 26 November 1951

REFERENCES 25X1A

PAGES 5 ENCLOSURES (NO. & TYPE) one 25X1
blueprint

REMARKS

25X1C

Reorganization of the AVH Border Guard Battalions.

1. The reorganization of the AVH border guard battalions started in December 1950. At that time it was announced that the border guard companies would be reorganized into battalions, and the existing border guard battalions into border guard area headquarters. The border guard area headquarters were subordinate to the AVH Border Guard High Command in Budapest under the command of Major General Laszlo Piro. (1)

Border Guard Area Headquarters in Csorna.

2. On 27 March 1951, the border guard area headquarters in Csorna (P 48/Y 13), was located on the north side of the main road from Sopron (P 48/X 63) to Győr (P 48/Y 44), west of a large square. It was commanded by an unidentified 45-year-old major. the headquarters controlled a reserve company with about 70 troops, one battalion in Koeszeg (P 48/X 60) and several so-called border police detachments, one of them in Koeszeg. 25X1
3. Prior to 26 March 1951, the border guard battalion in Koeszeg was located in the four-story former seminary for missionaries on the west edge of the town. The Jurisicsburg Kaserne had been transferred to a state corporation. The battalion, Prior to December, the battalion was organized into the headquarters with about 17 officers and 75 EM; a training company with 5 officers and 115 EM; a reserve company with 1 officer and 35 EM; and 1 border guard company each in Csepreg (C 48/X 70), Szombathely (P 48/C 78), Koermend (P 48/C 76) and Szentgotthard (Y 3/C 45). (2) 25X1
4. After reorganization, the battalion included the headquarters; one alert company; and border guard detachments in Koeszeg; Hetforras, 3 km west of Koeszeg; Hermannforras, 6 km southwest of Koeszeg; Horvatzsidany (P 48/X 60); Zsira (P 48/X 71); and Sopronkoevesd (P 48/X 72). Personnel of the battalion headquarters included Senior Lieutenant Jozsef Papp, commanding officer; 1 deputy commanding officer; 1 political officer; Junior Lieutenant Dobo (fnu), deputy political officer; 1 adjutant; 1 border control officer; the head of the security office; 3 investigation officers, one of them Junior Lieutenant Kocsis (fnu); 1 counter-intelligence officer; 1 signal officer; 25X1

CLASSIFICATION CONFIDENT

25X1

Document No. 006

No Change in Class. ☐

☐ Declassified

Class. Changed To: TS S (C)

Auth: HR 70-2

Date: Approved For Release 2004/01/28 : CIA-RDP82-00457R009900090006-2

DO NOT CIRCULATE

CONFIDENTIAL

25X1A

1 supply officer; 1 accounting officer; 1 clothing officer; 1 medical officer; and about 40 other personnel. The alert company, which had developed from the former reserve company, numbered only 18 men. The border guard detachments, [redacted] averaged 65 to 70 men.

25X1

The former border guard company in Csepreg and the former training company had been deactivated. The former border guard company in Szombathely became a battalion and was reassigned to the border guard area headquarters in Zalaegerszeg. No details were known on the reorganization of the border guard companies in Koermend and Szentgotthard.

5. Officers who served with the former battalion included Junior Lieutenant Kocsis (fnu), one of the four investigation officers, Junior Lieutenant Dobo (fnu), deputy political officer, and Junior Lieutenant Peczeli, (fnu), paymaster, who remained with the battalion; Captain Jozsef Marfi, deputy commanding officer; Lieutenant Mihalyi, (fnu), ordnance officer, and Junior Lieutenant Janos Szabo, commanding officer of the reserve company, were transferred to a border guard area headquarters in Zalaegerszeg (Y 4/V 10); Junior Lieutenant Laszlo Ujj, border control officer, who was promoted to the rank of senior lieutenant and transferred to the Border Guard High Command in Budapest; Senior Lieutenant Pal Balogh, commanding officer of the training company, and Junior Lieutenant Janos Bajai also of the training company, who were detached to the border guard NCO training school in Fót (Q 48/H 63); Junior Lieutenant Janos Bankoevi of the border guard company in Szombathely, who was appointed chief of staff of the new border guard battalion in Szombathely; and Major Gyula Domonkos, commanding officer, Captain Szabo (fnu), political officer, Junior Lieutenant Istvan Veres, an investigation officer, Junior Lieutenant Oerdoeg (fnu), and Senior Lieutenant Arpad Huszagh, commanding officer of the reserve company, who were transferred to undetermined places.

6. The battalion had 2 Opel Blitz trucks, 1 x 3-ton Raba truck, 2 jeeps, 1 Podjeda sedan, 2 small sedans of other types and 2 weapon carriers. It had also 10 horses and 2 horse-drawn vehicles.

7. EM were equipped with Soviet model M-48 rifles. [redacted] NCOs and squad leaders were armed with Soviet pistols or submachine guns with drum magazines. Light machine guns with drum magazines were issued only for training purposes. No systematic training was conducted with heavy Maxim machine guns. [redacted]

25X1

25X1

Border Guard Area Headquarters in Zalaegerszeg.

8. Prior to June 1951, the AVH border guard area headquarters in Zalaegerszeg (Y 4/V 10) [redacted] was commanded by an unidentified lieutenant colonel and was organized into a headquarters with a reserve company in Zalaegerszeg, one border guard battalion each Szombathely, Oeriszentpeter (Y 3/Z 80) and Koermend, and several border police detachments, one of which was stationed in Szentgotthard. (3)

9. The AVH border guard battalion in Szombathely [redacted] was organized into a headquarters, one alert company, and one border guard detachment each in Bozsok (P 48/C 69), Nagynarda (P 48/C 58), Felsőcsatár (P 48/C 67) and Pinkamindszent (P 48/C 76).

25X1

CONFIDENTIAL

25X1

25X1
25X1

[redacted] Captain Jozsef Szabo, the commanding officer of the battalion, was transferred in May 1951. He was succeeded by another captain whose name could not be determined. Other officers of the battalion headquarters included Lieutenant Armai (fnu), political officer; Junior Lieutenant Aglinszki (fnu), deputy political officer; Junior Lieutenant Istvan Unger, supply officer; and Lieutenant Janos Bankoevi. No training of recruits was conducted with the battalion, whereas an instruction course for patrol leaders was held there. The headquarters had one jeep and one sidecar motorcycle.

10. The AVH border guard detachment in Felsőecsatar [redacted] 25X1
Although the troops discussed the fact that the reorganization had changed the detachment into companies, the new designations were not in general use. Personnel of the border guard detachment in Felsőecsatar included Junior Lieutenant Sandor Markay, commanding officer, who was the only officer of the unit and a fanatic Communist; 1 deputy to the commanding officer; 1 political instructor; 1 private first class for training and 1 assistant to him; 1 border control NCO with a dog and 3 border control soldiers; 1 party liaison man; 1 secretary of the Democratic Youth Organization (DISZ); and 50 border guard troops. The detachment totaled about 80 men, only 65 of whom were available for duty, however. The detachment was quartered in the former Recreation Home for Teachers southwest of Felsőecsatar.
11. Arms available to the detachment included about 50 Soviet model M-48 rifles, about 20 Soviet model M-48 submachine guns with drum magazines, 5 Soviet model M-48 light machine guns with drum magazines, 2 model M-48 Maxim machine guns, 5 Soviet pistols and about 10 signal pistols. The field equipment of a border guard soldier consisted of 1 rifle, 2 ammunition pockets containing 40 rounds, 1 infantry spade, 1 rucksack, 1 blanket, 1 shelter half with tent pins, and 2 cold daily rations. The rucksacks were made of rubberized linen and replaced the field bags in October 1950. The patrol equipment of a border guard soldier included 1 rifle, 2 ammunition pockets, 1 signal pistol, and first-aid material.

Uniforms.

12. AVH border guard troops wore visor-type, round service caps with a wide green band bearing the coat of arms of the People's Republic in front. The overcoat had a wide collar with lapels and two rows of buttons also displaying the coat of arms of the People's Republic. Light-green, long patches bearing crossed-rifle insignia were worn on the collar of the overcoat. Signal personnel wore bundled lightning insignia, and medical corps personnel a green cross in a red circle. All troops wore a small bronze button with the coat of arms of the People's Republic over the branch of service insignia. The wide Soviet-style epaulets were also of light green color. Better quality epaulets could be purchased by AVH personnel at a price of 8 forints. Service color and insignia were also worn on the high-buttoned cloth blouses with turned-down collars. AVH personnel wore long cloth trousers to be tucked into either jackboots or hobnailed mountain boots of reddish leather; the latter were worn in mountainous regions. The leather belt had a two-tongued buckle and attachments for a pouch to be worn on the side.

Training.

13. Recruit training consisted of basic infantry drill and border guard training, with training in patrol duty being emphasized. Major practices or field exercises with other units were not held. Besides routine patrol duty, the border guard detachment in Felsőecsatar continued basic and border guard

CONFIDENTIAL [redacted]

25X1

training and political indoctrination. Each week two soldiers were detached to a light machine gun instruction course in Zalaegerszeg. One-week patrol leader courses were held in Szombathely. In May 1951, two soldiers were detached to a marksmanship course held in Sopron (P 48/X 63).

Border Guard Duty.

14. Border guard duty included both day and night duty. A sentry was on consecutive duty for 8 to 12 hours, including the time it took to walk between the post and the duty point. Sentries were inspected at night by special control parties in compliance with directives of the commanding officer. A raked and harrowed strip along the wire entanglement on the border was inspected with flashlights for fresh traces by a northern and a southern tracing party. All border guard soldiers were specialists at tracing. If border guard personnel left their own footprints on the strip, they marked the place with branches or patches of grass. Persons who did not answer when challenged or attempted to flee were fired at, if the person concerned was on Hungarian territory. It was permissible to arrest a person on Austrian territory if the arrested person could be taken to Hungarian territory and if the sentry had left his arms on Hungarian territory. Persons arrested with incorrect documentation were first taken to the commanding officer who sent them to the investigating officer of the battalion if necessary. During the period from 30 April to 24 June 1951, a total of five persons illegally crossed the border in the area of the detachment in Felsőcsatár. During the same period, two other persons were arrested after an attempted flight. The existing regulations made it possible for sentries to be called to account for border violations as many as five years following their dismissal from the border guard. Since border guard records were kept with the detachment, it was possible at any time to determine from an interrogation of the border crosser concerned who had been on duty when a border violation occurred. Thus it was almost impossible for a sentry not to arrest an apprehended person, especially as all patrol members were in constant fear of informers in their own ranks. Only the commanding officer of the border guard detachment was able to aid illegal border crossers since he alone knew where the patrols would be at certain periods of time. The border guard detachment was inspected by the battalion officers once or twice weekly, but the sentries themselves were infrequently inspected by officers from the battalion headquarters. (4)
15. The soldiers received special training at checking identification papers. They were required to ask for registration slips, if the identification papers had been issued inside the 15-km border zone and belonged to persons residing in that zone, and to ask for identification papers with photographs if the person concerned was not known. Each border guard had to be familiar with the names and signatures of the mayors of the villages in the border zone to be able to check on the authenticity of signatures on registration slips. Persons who had to approach especially close to the border had special permits. Persons who had registration slips from towns outside the border zone were required to have special permits which were issued by the commanding officer in charge in the border zone. Accordingly, persons who wished to stay in the border zone had to submit applications to the border guard detachment. Their permits were limited as to time and place.
16. The alert company, previously the reserve company, had only barracks duties, and was called out for commitment against border violations. The company was also alerted when attempts at escape were reported. Alert commitments were made when sentries found traces on the harrowed strip along the wire entanglement which indicated that the border had been violated. The

CONFIDENTIAL

25X1

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

violation of the border was announced to the border guard detachment either by signal flares at night or a burst of submachine gun fire in daytime and was then reported to the battalion. When the commanding officer of the border guard battalion had corroborated the report and established the time at which the violation had occurred, he alerted the company under his command. The company was then transported to the spot and, together with the personnel of the border guard detachment, encircled and combed the area, using pre-arranged signals such as bursts of fire or signal flares. All buildings in the area were thoroughly searched. Such raids would last from 12 hours to 4 days.

17. The so-called border police detachment in Koeszeg numbered between 20 and 25 men and was responsible for checks on persons traveling by rail.

Personnel and Discipline.

18. [redacted] members of the 1924 through 1928 classes served with the alert company of the battalion in Koeszeg. Members of the 1924 through 1927 classes were discharged in February 1951. No volunteers served with the unit. The soldiers of the border guard detachment in Felscecsatar belonged to the 1928 through 1930 classes. The soldiers of the 1929 through 1930 classes had been inducted in October 1950. The men felt that they had too many duties, morale was low, so frequently imprisonment was threatened to maintain discipline. They discussed the fact that, in the event of a change of government, they would be called to account for their activity as border guards, especially since they were granted special leave for each refugee arrested. Food was good and varied. In April 1951, pay of a private was increased from 105 to 150 forints per month.

[redacted]

Comments.

- (1) About 14 border guard battalions committed at the border have been assigned directly to the AVH Border Guard High Command in Budapest, the commanding general of which, Major General Pircs, [redacted] is known from newspaper reports of the fall of 1950. It is probable that, as in Czechoslovakia, the reorganization effects a considerable reinforcement of border guard troops, and consequently, an intensification of border control.
- (2) According to the report, the known border guard battalion in Koeszeg was not converted into a border guard area headquarters. It was previously quartered in the Jurisicsburg Kaserne. [redacted]

- (3) [redacted]
- (4) [redacted]

2 Annexes: 1 - [redacted]
1 - blueprint

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~